



**Mesa Parks, Recreation & Commercial Facilities
Youth Sports**



Flag Football League Handbook

Fall 2015-Updated 8/31/15

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Youth Sports
Flag Football League Handbook Fall 2015

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Dear Participants and Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to City of Mesa Youth Sports. We are so glad that you have chosen to participate in our program. We are excited to have you!

Youth Sports has taken great measures to increase the number of programs offered to children in the City of Mesa. We are dedicated to providing a diverse range of programs that include both traditional and non-traditional sports to ensure that the needs of all youth are being met. By offering an assortment of programs throughout the year, youth have a chance to participate in team sports and individual based sports. They also have the opportunity to try sports that are unique and new in the Phoenix metro area. All of these programs are focused on having fun, teaching the proper fundamentals and skills, being active and understanding the importance of physical activity, learning to play as a team, and developing good sportsmanship. Youth Sports programs utilize volunteer coaches when possible which not only helps keep program costs low, but allow for parents/guardians and community members to become more involved in the lives of their kids. Youth Sports is also committed to providing quality services that are convenient and deliver programs throughout Mesa at several sites to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to become involved. Affordability is also a priority. We keep our fees low to ensure everyone can participate. We also have fee assistance for qualifying Mesa residents. In addition, Youth Sports supplies majority of the equipment to help keep outside costs low for families.

We strive to have staff members and volunteer coaches who demonstrate positive examples of professionalism and leadership and are good role models for our youth. Safety is our number one priority and we make sure our participants wellbeing is always at the forefront. In addition, our programs concentrate more on having fun and developing in the sport and less on winning and what the score is. We are equal play programs which mean equal opportunity for all to participate in both playing time and positions.

The information contained in this handbook outlines the program you have registered your child for. It is meant to be a guide to help everyone have a fun, safe, and well-informed experience. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Lacy. We are so glad to have you as a part of our program and thank you for choosing us!

Sincerely,

Lacy Bienkowski
Recreation Programmer
City of Mesa Youth Sports

Important Contact Information

Lacy Bienkowski, Recreation Programmer 480-644-3040
..... lacy.bienkowski@mesaaz.gov
Tiffany Krahenbuhl, Recreation Coordinator 480-644-4196
..... tiffany.krahenbuhl@mesaaz.gov
City of Mesa PRCF Registrar's Office 480-644-2352
City of Mesa Weather Hotline 480-644-2765
Mesa Youth Sports Website..... www.mesaaz.gov/youthsports
Mesa Youth Sports Facebook www.facebook.com/mesayouthsports

Sports Office

200 S. Center Street, Building 1
Mesa, AZ 85210
480-644-2698 (Fax)
Hours: Monday-Thursday, 7:00 am-6:00 pm

League Information

Game Schedule:

- *8 weeks of regular season games
- *Saturdays, October 10-December 112 (No games on October 17 or November 28)
- *Quail Run Soccer Complex, Fields 3 and 4 (4155 E. Virginia St, Mesa, AZ 85215)
- *Game times will be between 9:30 AM and 4:30 PM (game times are subject to change)
- *Game schedules will be posted on our website on Monday, September 21 at 5 PM.

Uniform, Protective Gear and Equipment:

- *Participants will receive a team shirt with a number on the back at their first game. This shirt must be worn to each game.
- *No items may be added to the team shirt including iron on patches, screen prints, etc due to established relationships with our sponsors and the City of Mesa's inability to endorse any additions.
- *Participants are required to wear closed-toe athletic shoes or plastic cleats to all practices and games for safety reasons. If you have a participant who does not have proper footwear, let the league director know as we have a supply of new and gently used athletic shoes that they can have.
- *Participants are encouraged to wear a mouth guard for safety reasons.
- *Players may tape their forearms, hands and fingers. Players may wear gloves, elbow pads, and kneepads. Braces with exposed metal are not allowed.
- *Participants should wear athletic shorts or pants which allow for more comfort while playing.
- *No jewelry except medical alert items.
- *Volunteer coaches will be provided with age appropriate balls, first aid kit and other equipment for practice and games. This equipment is on loan from Youth Sports and is a benefit of our program.
- *Youth Sports will provide the game balls.
- *Participants may bring their own ball, but should make sure to put their name on it. Youth Sports is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged property.
- *Players should always practice with the same size of ball that is used in games. This allows kids to accurately practice their skills and is necessary in their proper progression in the sport.

Team Formation:

- Youth Sports is committed to providing a fair and equally balanced recreational league for all participants. We have a responsibility to make sure the best interest of our kids is always in the forefront. After much review of feedback from coaches, parents/participants, and staff as well as needing to be proactive with issues that frequently arise, Youth Sports changed their policies in 2014 regarding how teams are formed in order to achieve this balance and minimize issues.
- *Participants will be notified of their team, coach, practice time and location, and game schedule via email on Monday, September 21 at 5 PM. Participants will also be contacted by their coach by this time as well.
 - *Teams will be formed based on grade, not age.
 - *Teams will be assembled as near to the current elementary school attending and middle school zone as possible.

- *Each participant may make one friend request and it must be included upon registration or by contacting the league director at time of registration. We will try our best to accommodate, but unfortunately cannot guarantee any requests.
- *Due to the complexity of forming teams including many moving parts such as number of teams, coach locations, number of kids in a given area, friend requests, etc we tried our best to place your child on a team as close to home as possible.
- *No coach requests will be taken.
- *No roster requests from coaches will be taken and no full teams will be allowed to register as a group.
- *Participants and teams are taken on a first-come, first-serve basis during the registration process.
- *Teams will consist of approximately 12 players depending on division. Team sizes may vary based on registration numbers and is at the discretion of the league director.
- *Each team must be made of girls or boys who are in the proper and corresponding grade for each division. Official school records will be used to support proof of grade if the question of proper placement is raised. Only the league director can request such records. Proof of grade shall be provided to the league director within one week of request.
- *Participants may only play on one team in our league.
- *Due to the complexity of forming teams, large volume of special requests, and fairness to everyone, players may not be switched to another team once teams are announced.

Rosters and Participant Information:

- *Only players who have registered with Youth Sports will be placed on a team roster. Volunteer coaches will receive their official team roster at the coaches' meeting. Only players on the official roster may participate in practices and games.
- *Volunteer coaches will receive important information for each participant and should be used for team related reasons only.
- *All players must fill out a participant waiver/form and turn it into the volunteer coach at the first practice or game. This waiver/form has details on the participant, parent/guardian contacts, emergency contacts, and health/behavior information. This form will be emailed to participants in advance, but the volunteer coaches will be provided with paper copies just in case.
- *All participants will receive a ribbon on their last day of games.
- *Participants should bring a bottle of water with their name on it to keep hydrated at practices and games. Water fountains and/or jugs will be available as well at games.

Equal Play:

- *This league is equal play. This means equal opportunity for all kids to participate in both playing time and positions. Volunteer coaches must follow this philosophy as it allows all youth to not only grow in the sport, but gain self-confidence and have fun as well. We ask all coaches to carefully track and monitor each participant's playing time and positions played in order to provide an equal opportunity for all.

Practices:

- *Practices begin the week of September 21 for finalized rosters with approved coaches.
- *Practice time and location are determined by the volunteer coach, are held on different days than the game and information will be provided after teams are formed.

*All practices must be conducted on public property such as a city park or school field. Practices may not be held on private property such as a backyard for liability reasons.

*Due to lighted field space availability, coach availability, and teams with various player schools, practice locations are as close to your residence as possible.

*By limiting the number of sites for practice, more teams will be practicing together at a location which allows them to have the opportunity to scrimmage each other and have more game like experience throughout the season. It also allows Youth Sports to more adequately access teams as well as assist coaches and parents with issues that arise

*Our league provides one practice a week. Participants are asked to attend all practices in addition to the games. An additional optional practice time can be added, but participants are not required to attend more than one a week as it is not a condition of our program. Participants may not be punished or played less for not attending additional practices.

*Coaches must notify the league director in advance if they are changing the location, day or time of practice.

*Youth Sports staff does visit practice sites throughout the season.

Attendance:

*Participants should arrive fifteen minutes prior to the start of a practice or game, unless otherwise requested by the volunteer coach. Games will start on time as scheduled and are unable to be delayed to wait for coaches, players or teams as that affects all the other players, teams, and games. If a participant is arriving prior to this time without proper supervision, a parent/guardian should be called. If a participant is consistently dropped off too early without parent/guardian supervision, they may be dropped from the program without refund.

*Participants are expected to be picked up from games and practices on time. If a participant is still there after ten minutes, a parent/guardian should be called. If a participant is consistently picked up late, they may be dropped from the program without refund.

***Participants are expected to attend practices AND games. Volunteer coaches will track attendance and a child's play time may be altered to less than equal if they have several absences.**

*Understandably, things come up and a participant might need to miss a game or practice. If you are unable to attend, please notify the volunteer coach or league director in advance if possible

***Coaches and parents should immediately notify the league director of any players who are not participating or who have dropped from the team.**

Divisions:

*Co-ed, Grades 1st-2nd

- Two 20 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime

- Pee Wee size ball

- 6 vs 6

- Will not keep score

- Officiated by Youth Sports staff

*Co-ed, Grades 3rd-4th

- Two 20 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime

- Pee Wee size ball

- 6 vs 6

- Will keep score

- Officiated by Youth Sports staff
- *Co-ed, Grades 5th-6th
 - Two 20 minute halves with a 5 minute halftime
 - Youth size ball
 - 6 vs 6
 - Will keep score
 - Officiated by Youth Sports staff

Score Keeping and Standings:

*It is important to know that this league focuses more on having fun and developing in the sport, and less about what the score is or wins vs. losses. With that being said, we do feel there is an age when it is appropriate to begin keeping score.

- 1st-2nd grade division will not keep score
- 3rd-4th grade division will keep score
- 5th-6th grade division will keep score

*We ask that all participants, coaches, parents/guardians and spectators concentrate on the fundamentals and love of the game rather than the score.

*Coaches should make every effort to ensure that games are safe, fair and fun for players. In particular, in those cases where one team is substantially dominating the game, coaches should do all they can to minimize the chances of lopsided scores.

*Youth Sports will not be tracking or keeping standings for the league.

Picture Day:

*Saturday, October 31

*Quail Run Soccer Complex, Fields 3 and 4 (4155 E. Virginia St, Mesa, AZ 85215)

*Lifetouch Sports will be taking individual and team photos.

*All participants should plan on being at this game in order to be part of the picture.

*All teams must take a team picture regardless of whether they are buying pictures or not.

*Purchasing pictures is optional. It is purely a benefit of our league.

*Volunteer coaches will receive picture packets at the first game and then should pass out the information to participants that day.

*Picture day schedule will be posted on our website on October 5.

*All coaches will receive a complimentary team photo as well as an individual photo of them and their child.

End of Season Family Fun Day (No Tournament)

*Due to sportsmanship issues, we no longer are running an end of season tournament. A Family Fun Day has been added in its place in order to provide a more positive end to the season. The event provides an opportunity for participants and their families to come together to celebrate. Food and games are discounted during this time.

*Friday, December 11 from 4:00-9:00pm at Peter Piper Pizza (Riverview Shopping Complex, 1906 W. Rio Salado, Mesa).

*Teams are encouraged to attend the event together with their families. A reserved area with tables will be provided for our group. Coaches will be asked to give an approximate head count at the second to last week of games.

*Each player will receive the following items for the event: Coupon for 10 free tokens, Coupon for a free 7" personal pizza, Raffle ticket for a chance to win 1,000 free prize tickets.

Miscellaneous Field Rules:

- *A dashed safety line is marked five feet from each sideline. All participants, coaches, parents/guardians and spectators must stay behind this dashed line as well as refrain from standing on the end lines or behind the goals at all times during the game for safety reasons.
- *Food and drink are not permitted on the fields. Only water is allowed.
- *After each game, all coaches are responsible for cleaning their bench area including equipment and trash.
- *After each game, all snacks for players must be provided outside the field area.
- *Do not leave personal items unattended. Youth Sports is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- *Appropriate attire must be worn at all times. This includes appropriate shirts, shorts/pants and shoes.
- *All children must be directly supervised by their parents at all times during practices and games. Please do not allow kids to play or wander around unattended, play with the water jugs, climb fences or trees, etc. This is for the safety and respect of everyone.
- *Tobacco, drugs and alcohol are strictly prohibited at practice and game sites.

Parent/Guardian Information:

- *Parents/guardians will receive a handbook via email on Monday, September 21. It includes the *Spectator Code of Conduct* and *Participant Code of Conduct and Guidelines*. It is also available on our website. Please familiarize yourselves with the league and policies in advance and discuss the information with your child and other spectators to help them prepare as well.
- *Due to the nature of working with kids, the City of Mesa has a strict policy about volunteers being background checked including fingerprints and Youth Sports has a policy that all coaches must be approved and be trained prior to volunteering as a coach. Parents or other adults are welcome to assist at practices if you need help with a certain drill or activity, but they can never be alone at a practice or game without an authorized coach from your team there. They will also need to remain spectators on the sidelines and may not actually help coach the team. This includes instruction to the kids during the game/timeouts/halftime, handling substitutions, calling out plays, managing playing time, etc.
- *Surveys will be conducted onsite during the last two weeks of games. Youth Sports values your feedback, therefore, we ask everyone to please complete a survey during this time.
- *Youth Sports' is dedicated to helping kids further develop in soccer and have an enjoyable experience! Due to the goal of our league and nature of kids still trying to understand the concepts of the game, it is unrealistic for our referees to call absolutely every violation. We ask everyone to please be patient with our referees. They truly want to help the kids so will be both guiding and officiating them. The first game will be officiated with a little more leniency so the kids can get acclimated to the league and game. Games will be officiated as fairly as possible while still allowing a flow and continuity to the game without constant stoppage. This is to help ensure the kids enjoy the playing experience as much as possible.
- *Children play flag football for fun. Please realize that everyone wants to enjoy the game. Below are some simple rules regarding negative behavior that should be observed and considered carefully:

- Please do not shout instructions to your child. This will cause confusion and may result in erroneous play by your child. The coach has instructed your child on how to play and should be the only one doing so during the game. Please refrain from coaching from the sidelines as well.
- Grieve in silence whenever something occurs that goes against your child's team. A display of anger may inflame a delicate situation.
- Please do not run up and down the sidelines. Find a comfortable place to sit or stand and enjoy the game.
- Please do not shout insults at the referee or criticize their calls. Unsportsmanlike behavior such as this can result in penalties for your team or the removal from the facility.

*There may come a time when a parent disagrees with their child's coach or the referee regarding a practice or game. If this does happen, parents are asked to always address the coach (never the referees) away from the children and only at an appropriate time. Inappropriate times would be right before, during, or right after practice and games as the coaches have an obligation to the players at that time. It is highly encouraged to wait at least 24 hours and then schedule a time with the coach to meet as this waiting period always emotions to calm and an opportunity to have a clear head during the meeting. Communication between parties should remain constructive and at no time shall any party be rude, use foul language, or be abusive physically or verbally. If the issue cannot be resolved after this meeting, parents may proceed to contact the league director for further assistance.

Pre-Season Parent Meeting:

*Coaches must conduct a pre-season team meeting complete by October 1.

*All participants must have a parent/guardian present at the meeting in order to participate in the league. All parents must then sign a form acknowledging they attended the meeting as well as understand and agree to abide by the league and coach policies.

*Participants may not play in any games until their parent/guardian has completed the meeting.

Volunteer Coaches:

*Our flag football league depends on the kindness of volunteers to coach our teams. Youth Sports believes getting parents/guardians and community members involved with our league really adds to the quality of our program and its overall success. Without volunteers, we are unable to provide our league. Safety is our number one priority with youth; therefore, all volunteer coaches have the following requirements:

- Must be 18 years old and older.
- Volunteer application submitted by August 24 at 12pm.
- Background check, fingerprinting, and ID badge completed by September 1 at 12pm.
- Attend Mandatory Coaches' Training on Saturday, September 19 from 8-11am.
- Abide by the Coaches' Code of Ethics, Coach Handbook and League Rulebook
- Only the approved and authorized coaches who have been cleared by the league director and completed the requirements may coach a team. This is for safety and liability reasons.
- At least one approved and authorized volunteer coach must attend all practices and games. If unable to attend a practice or game, they must contact the league director at least 48 hours in advance to make other arrangements that fall within our policies and guidelines.

Touch Policy:

*Due to liability reasons and for the safety of all staff, volunteers, and participants, a strict limited touch policy is in place regarding youth. Staff and volunteer's physical contact with participants must be limited to high fives and contact that directly relates to demonstration/correction of a sport such as arm position while shooting a basketball. This must be done with the child's permission first. Staff and volunteers may not hug, pick up or have unnecessary physical contact. Staff and volunteers need to remind participants to keep their hands to themselves and what appropriate contact is allowed.

Disciplinary Policies:

*The coach and culture keeper (as well as all participants, parents/guardians and spectators) must follow the policies and guidelines of City of Mesa Youth Sports. These can be found in our League Handbook, Coaches' Handbook, and League Rulebook. Failure by a person (coach, culture keeper, parent/guardian, participant, or spectator) to do so will result in penalties assessed to a team. Disciplinary actions include a written warning for the first offense, one game suspension for the second offense, and expulsion from the league for the third offense.

*The coach and culture keeper must maintain respectful communication (verbal and nonverbal) as well as maintain a positive sportsmanlike manner with staff and league administration. Failure by a person (coach, culture keeper, parent/guardian, participant, or spectator) to do so will result in penalties assessed to a team. Disciplinary actions include a written warning for the first offense, one game suspension for the second offense, and expulsion from the league for the third offense.

Positive Play Project

Overview

*Youth Sports has a new initiative starting in fall 2013. *Positive Play Project* encourages youth development and wellness in sports. We have partnered with several local organizations to provide high quality trainings, resources and outreach in areas including sportsmanship, positive coaching, concussion awareness, injury prevention, equipment and safety gear access, hydration and nutrition.

*The Positive Play Project received the "Outstanding Sports Program" award from the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association in August 2014.

*Partners include Positive Coaching Alliance, A.T. Still University, NextCare, ASU College of Health Solutions, and East Valley Sports.

**Positive Play Project* is an active guide and support tool for all Youth Sports coaches, parents/guardians, participants and staff. The safety and well-being of participants is our number one priority. Please familiarize yourself with the educational material located in this manual as well as on the Youth Sports website.

Sportsmanship:

*Great sportsmanship is something that Youth Sports hopes to instill in all of our participants, parents/guardians, coaches, staff, and spectators. Sportsmanship is a key virtue that can help youth in not only sports, but in school and life as well. We are all here for the kids to have fun and should make sure our emotions and desire to win do not impede on their right to have a happy and positive playing environment.

*According to the National Alliance of Youth Sports, 70% of kids quit playing youth sports by the time they are 13 because it isn't fun anymore. Youth Sports wants to change that, but we can't do it alone. We ask everyone, including participants, parents/guardians, coaches, staff, and spectators to play an active role in keeping the game fun and demonstrate great examples of sportsmanship.

*Please review the following sportsmanship information for Youth Sports' aspirations in our programs.

- *Participant Code of Conduct and Guideline*
- *Spectator Code of Conduct*
- *Coaches' Code of Ethics*



Mesa Parks, Recreation & Commercial Facilities

PARTICIPANT CODE OF CONDUCT AND GUIDELINES

- Updated 8/13/15

Purpose:

The purpose of the City of Mesa Youth Sports programs are to focus on having fun, teaching the proper fundamentals and skills, being active and understanding the importance of physical activity, learning to play as a team, and developing good sportsmanship. We are equal play programs. This means equal opportunity to participate in both playing time and positions. The following codes of conduct and guidelines should be followed to ensure a positive experience for all participants.

Registration:

- Participants may only play once they have registered and have been placed on the official program roster. (League participants will then be placed on a team roster. Participants may only play for one team.)
- Participants should be registered for the program division based on their grade. If an error in division is made, please contact the coach, instructor, or league director as soon as possible.
- Participants should always check in with their coach, instructor, or program director upon arrival and turn in any required paperwork including the participant waiver/form.
- All participants under the age of 18 require a parent/guardian signature in order to register and play.

Uniform and Dress Code:

- Participants should wear a t-shirt. League participants must wear their team shirt to each game.
- Athletic pants or shorts are encouraged which allow for more comfort. No skirts, dresses, or wide leg pants that could hinder safe movement or cause a participant to trip and fall.
- No sandals, flats, or sneakers similar to Chuck Taylors as they have no foot support. The only acceptable footwear is a true closed-toe athletic shoe. Participants may wear plastic cleats or sport specific shoes if the sport allows it.
- No jewelry. This includes earrings, necklaces, watches, rings, bracelets, etc. Medical alert items are allowed.
- Participants must wear protective gear required by the league/program in order to play. This may include shin guards, knee pads, and mouth guards.

Sportsmanship:

- Respect ROOTS: Rules, Opponents, Officials, Team, Self.
- This program is designed to be a positive place where everyone has the same opportunity to participate and learn. Having fun, showing effort and developing in the sport is more important than winning or the score.
- While it is a part of sports to win or lose, it is not in good taste or good sportsmanship to taunt, make fun of, or harass the other teams, coaches or players. Players should

positively cheer on their team and provide moral support. Refrain from applauding errors by opponents or penalties inflicted upon them.

- It is also unacceptable behavior to intentionally “run-up” the score against a team.
- No participant shall intentionally injure another player.
- Participants should cheer their teammates on and help censure teammate’s inappropriate behavior which reflects poorly upon the entire team and program.
- Teams should always shake hands after a game and congratulate each other.
- Show respect for all game officials, scorekeepers, and instructors and the calls they make. Do not shout insults or criticize their calls.

Language and Actions:

- No swearing or abusive language. This includes taunting, heckling, name-calling, as well as being rude or demeaning to other players, coaches, officials, parents/guardians, and spectators in any way. There is also a zero tolerance on bullying.
- No use of obscene gestures or similar actions.
- Refrain from actions which may be a potential hazard to health, safety, and well-being of anyone.
- Do not abuse, vandalize, or steal City of Mesa or anyone’s property.

Discipline/Behavior Issues:

- 1st occurrence – Warning and asked to correct behavior.
- 2nd occurrence – Time out or sit out of play for an allotted amount of time.
- 3rd occurrence – Sit out for the remainder of practice, game, or activity. Coach, staff, or program director will speak to parents/guardians and corrective action will be put in place.
- Additional occurrences- Suspension or removal from program may be implemented by program director.
- If it is suspected that a participant may have a behavioral disability, contact the program director immediately to discuss the option of providing additional trained staff to assist with the situation.

Program Attendance:

- Participants should arrive fifteen minutes prior to the start of the program, but no sooner due to safety reasons. League participants should arrive fifteen minutes early as well unless otherwise requested by the coach. Programs (including games) will start as scheduled and are unable to be delayed to wait for players as that affects all the other players, teams, and games. If a participant is arriving prior to this time, a parent/guardian will be called. If a participant is consistently dropped off early, they may be dropped from the program without refund.
- Participants are expected to be picked up from the program on time. If a participant is still there after ten minutes, a parent/guardian will be called. If a participant is consistently picked up late, they may be dropped from the program without refund.
- Participants are expected to attend all scheduled programming. League participants are expected to attend practices – not just the games. We understand that things come up and a participant might need to miss programming, but if you are unable to attend an activity, practice, or game, please notify the coach, instructor, or program director in advance if possible.



Mesa Parks, Recreation & Commercial Facilities **SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT-Updated 8/13/15**

Purpose:

Spectators (including parents/guardians) play an important role in our program. Children play sports for fun and everyone wants to enjoy the activity. We want to provide as much support and cheering for our youth as possible. The habits, language, and general actions of all spectators, youth and adults alike, go a long way in showing the quality and sportsmanship of our community. Inappropriate behavior and actions may result in penalties for your team, removal from the particular activity and/or restriction from attendance at future activities. Below are some simple rules regarding behavior that should be observed and considered carefully:

- Respect ROOTS: Rules, Opponents, Officials, Team, Self. This program is designed to be a positive place where everyone has the same opportunity to participate and learn. Having fun and developing in the sport is more important than winning or the score.
- While it is a part of sports to win or lose, it is not in good taste or good sportsmanship to taunt, make fun of, or harass the other teams, coaches or players. Spectators should positively cheer on both teams and provide moral support. Refrain from applauding errors by opponents or penalties inflicted upon them.
- Help censure inappropriate behavior of other spectators that is unbecoming which reflects poorly and could hurt players, team, league, and program.
- Show respect for all game officials, scorekeepers, and instructors and the calls they make. Do not shout insults or criticize their calls.
- Respect the decisions the coach is making and do not shout instructions to your child. This will cause confusion and may result in erroneous play by your child. The coach has instructed your child on how to play and should be the only one doing so during the program. Refrain from coaching from the sidelines as well.
- Grieve in silence whenever something occurs that goes against your child's team. A display of anger may inflame a delicate situation. If you have an issue, the parent/guardian should address it with the coach or staff at a time when it won't interfere with the kids or their play and when emotions have calmed.
- No swearing or abusive language. This includes taunting, heckling, name-calling, as well as being rude or demeaning to other players, coaches, officials, parents/guardians, and spectators in any way. There is also a zero tolerance on bullying.
- Refrain from actions which may be a hazard to health, safety, and well-being of anyone.
- Do not abuse, vandalize, or steal City of Mesa or anyone else's property.
- Abstain from other inappropriate behavior deemed repetitive, flagrant, or severe by staff. No use of obscene gestures or similar actions. If a staff, coach, or spectator asks another spectator to censure or adjust their behavior, please do so out of respect for the kids. Do not make a scene during their program. Any issues should be resolved at the right time, away for the kids and respectfully.
- Find one comfortable place on the sidelines to relax and enjoy the activity. Do not run up and down the sidelines or sit next to/behind the goals. Only staff, players and Youth Sports approved coaches are allowed on the field and team bench sidelines. Parents and spectators need to remain on the spectator sidelines.
- Tobacco (chewing and smoking), drugs, and alcohol are strictly prohibited at all Youth Sports programs.



Mesa Parks, Recreation & Commercial Facilities COACHES' CODE OF ETHICS-Updated 8/13/15

I will place the emotional and physical wellbeing of my players ahead of a personal desire to win. This means that I will:

- Use appropriate language when interacting with players, officials, parents/guardians and spectators.
- Include all players in team activities, disregarding race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, body type, disability, ability, or any other legally protected classification.
- Treat all players, officials, parents/guardians, and spectators with dignity and respect.
- Play all players equally. This includes both playing time and positions.
- Teach my players that it is more important to have fun and develop in the sport and less about winning and what the score is. I will place the emphasis on fun, effort and participation.

I will treat each player as an individual, remembering the large range of emotional and physical development for the same age group. This means that I will:

- Encourage all players, regardless of skill level, to be included as a member of the team and to remain involved.
- Recognize the physical tasks, such as drills, which are and are not appropriate for my players.
- Recognize that physical, social, and emotional maturation vary with each individual player and consider these factors when planning practice and in games.
- Be understanding and patient in that a participant may have a behavioral, emotional, or physical disability that may need additional support. I will contact the league director for assistance.

I will do my best to provide a safe playing situation for my players. This means that I will:

- Maintain a high level of awareness of potentially unsafe conditions and correct or avoid unsafe playing conditions.
- Teach players how to properly perform a drill or skill in order to prevent injury to themselves or others.
- Protect players from sexual molestation, assault, and physical or emotional abuse while at practice and games.
- Use age appropriate equipment necessary to protect players.
- Require athletic shoes and necessary protective gear in order to participate.
- Keep all participants' personal information confidential and only use it for purposes directly related to the league and team. I will never reveal personal details without parental/guardian consent.

I will promise to review and practice the basic first aid principles needed to treat injuries of my players. This means that I will:

- Keep basic first aid supplies available in all practice and game situations.
- Recognize and administer proper first aid to players who are injured.

- Demonstrate concern for injured players, notify parents/guardians and staff, and cooperate with medical authorities when necessary.
- Protect the player by not returning them to the activity if they are compromised by injury.

I will do my best to organize practices that are fun and challenging for all my players. This means that I will:

- Adopt the positive view of a situation. That is, teach my players that it is our basic moral code to treat others, as we would like to be treated.
- Abide by the rules and the spirit of the game.
- Provide an environment that is conducive to fair and equal competition by my players.
- Use my influence as a coach to promote and teach sportsmanship and fair play.

I will provide a sports environment for my team that is free of drugs, tobacco, and alcohol, and I will refrain from their use at all Mesa Parks, Recreation programs. This means I will:

- Refrain from tobacco (chewing and smoking), drugs, and alcohol at all programs including practices, games and meetings. I will not use or possess them and will not be impaired by or have the presence of any substance during this time.
- Remind parents/guardians to refrain from alcohol, tobacco, and drugs at team activities such including practices and games.
- Refrain from providing any type of alcohol, tobacco, or drug to any of my players.

I will be knowledgeable in the rules of each sport that I coach, and I will teach these rules to my players. This means that I will:

- Become knowledgeable, understanding and supportive of all applicable game rules, league rules, regulations and policies, if not already.
- Teach and require compliance of these rules from my players.

I will use coaching techniques appropriate for each of the skills that I teach. This means that I will:

- Demonstrate proper technique and help players with their technique.
- Teach techniques that reduce the risk of injury to my own players and opponents.
- Discourage illegal contact or dangerous play and will administer swift and equal discipline to players involved in such activities.

I will remember that I am a youth sports coach, and that the game is for children and not adults. This means that I will:

- Maintain a positive, helpful, and supportive attitude.
- Exercise my authority/influence to control the behavior of parents/guardians and spectators.
- Exhibit gracious acceptance of defeat or victory.
- Accept and adhere to all league rules and policies.
- Fulfill the expected role of a coach and adopt a “children first” philosophy.
- Allow and encourage the players to listen, learn, and play hard within the rules.

BY SIGNING BELOW, I AGREE TO ADHERE TO THE MESA PARKS AND RECREATION COACH’S CODE OF ETHICS AND RECOGNIZE THAT I MAY, IN SOME WAY, BE PENALIZED IF I AM FOUND NOT TO BE IN COMPLIANCE.

SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINT NAME

SPORT

Awards:

*As part of the *Positive Play Project*, Youth Sports will be handing out two awards per league division as a way of recognizing and thanking our positive coaches and teams.

***Positive Coaching Award**

- The Positive Coaching Award will be given to one coach in each division of our leagues that demonstrates the qualities most important to Youth Sports and the *Positive Play Project*. Players, coaches, parents/guardians and staff will vote for the coach in their league that they feel deserves this special acknowledgment. The recipient of the Positive Coaching Award will receive recognition and a plaque.

***Positive Team Award**

- The Positive Team Award will be given to a team in each division of our leagues that demonstrates the qualities most important to Youth Sports and the *Positive Play Project*. Players, coaches, parents/guardians and staff will vote for the team in their league that they feel deserves this special acknowledgment. The recipients of the Positive Team Award will each receive recognition and a medal.

***Voting Process**

- During the second to last regular season game, teams in each league will be provided with voting ballots. Ballots must be filled out onsite at the game and returned the same day. Each youth participant and their parent/guardian will receive one ballot to vote for the Positive Coaching Award and the Positive Team Award. Teams may not vote for themselves or their own coaches. Staff will also cast votes for both awards. Ballots will be tabulated and winners will be announced at the last regular season game. (*Please note: League administration reserves the right to disqualify a coach or team from consideration based on complaints, disciplinary issues, or other negative behavior.*)

Culture Keeper:

*One parent/guardian per team will be elected as the “Culture Keeper” who will help support the coach and league in ensuring other team parents/guardians and players follow the mission and goals of Youth Sports and the *Positive Play Project*. The culture keeper is another parent/guardian, family member, etc of a team member who remains a spectator on the sidelines at team practices and games whose responsibility is to support the league and coach. Here are some examples of things the culture keeper can help with: encouraging spectators to cheer on the kids, demonstrating great sportsmanship, helping answer parents’ questions about the game rules, and helping with water and snacks. Please note, the culture keeper is not a coach and may not coach or take on any coach responsibilities.

*The “Culture Keeper” should be able to attend all (or most) games. The coach will be responsible for finding the “Culture Keeper” and notifying the league director by October 5.

Trained Staff and Coaches:

*All league games have trained staff on site to supervise, instruct, and officiate. These staff members have experience and knowledge in the sport which is enhanced by training provided by Youth Sports including working with youth, safety precautions, and emergency procedures.

*All volunteer coaches are required go through the *Positive Play Project* training once a year.

This training includes Positive Coaching Alliance, sports safety (concussions and injury prevention) as well as nutrition and hydration to help ensure safe and effective coaching.

Coaches are also required to attend the mandatory league meeting prior to the start of the season.

First Aid, CPR, and AED:

- *All league games have a First Aid kit and a certified staff in First Aid on site in case of emergency. If you need First aid, please see any staff member for assistance.
- * All league games have an AED and a certified staff in CPR and AED on site in case of emergency. If you have a serious emergency requiring such, please immediately call 911 and see any staff member for assistance.
- *All volunteer coaches are provided with a first aid kit to have at practices and games.

Concussion Awareness:

- *Youth Sports follows the recommendations and guidelines on concussions from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/) as well as AT Still University.
- *Concussions can occur in any sport; therefore, all volunteer coaches need to know concussion signs and symptoms and what to do if a concussion occurs. All volunteer coaches receive a handout on concussions and are encouraged to watch the online training to learn more. (<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/Training/HeadsUpConcussion.html>)
- *Volunteer coaches should always notify parents/guardians and league director if a participant had contact with their head whether it seemed severe or not.
- *The Youth Sports website also has these resources available including online concussion training and information for parents/guardians and coaches.

Injuries and Prevention:

- *Youth Sports follows the recommendations and guidelines from AT Still University.
- *All volunteer coaches receive a handout on injuries.
- *The Youth Sports website also has these resources available for parents/guardians and coaches.
- *Volunteer coaches must always notify immediately parents/guardians and league administration if a participant had an injury in a practice or game whether it seemed severe or not.

Nutrition and Hydration:

- *Youth Sports follows the recommendations and guidelines from AT Still University and ASU College of Health Solutions.
- *All volunteer coaches receive a handout on nutrition and hydration.
- *The Youth Sports website also has these resources available for parents/guardians and coaches.
- *Snacks provided to participants/teams after practices and games do need to stay within these healthy guidelines. Please do not bring doughnuts, cookies, chips, pop, sugary drinks, etc. as we want to promote healthy wellness of young athletes.

Age Appropriate Equipment, Dimensions and Rules:

- *All leagues use age appropriate equipment, dimensions, and rules to ensure safety and proper age progression in the sport.

Appropriate Shoes, Attire, and Protective Gear:

- *Athletic pants or shorts are encouraged which allow for more comfort. No skirts, dresses, or wide leg pants that could hinder safe movement or cause a participant to trip and fall.
- *No sandals, flats, or sneakers similar to Chuck Taylors as they have no foot support. The only acceptable footwear is a true closed-toe athletic shoe. Participants may wear sport specific shoes such as plastic cleats if the program allows it. No metal cleats are allowed. If you have a

participant who does not have proper footwear, let league administration know as we have a supply of new and gently used athletic shoes that they can have.

*No jewelry. This includes earrings, necklaces, watches, rings, bracelets, etc. Medical alert items are allowed.

*Participants must wear protective gear required by the program in order to play. This may include shin guards, knee pads, and mouth guards. Participants and parents/guardians will be notified in advance of the required protective gear.

Inclement Weather:

*Volunteer coaches, parents/guardians and participants are encouraged to check the weather hotline during inclement weather situations. The hotline number is 480-644-2765.

*During game situations, the league director will monitor weather and make the final decision as whether to play, postpone, suspend or cancel a game due to inclement weather. The league director will contact coaches with as much notice as possible if a cancellation or delay is made. Volunteer coaches are in turn are responsible for notifying their team immediately.

*During practice situations, volunteer coaches will monitor inclement weather and use their best judgment as whether to play or cancel based on Youth Sports guidelines. Volunteer coaches will contact participants with as much notice as possible if a cancellation or delay is made. The league director may make an administrative decision to cancel all practices if the weather calls for it. The league director will notify volunteer coaches who must in turn notify their teams immediately.